

Jesus Feeds the 5,000

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Jesus can do great things with what we give Him, and He takes care of our needs.

Bible passage: John 6:1–14. Read it before class. Matthew 14, Mark 6 and Luke 9 tell the same story.

Memory verse: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."
Philippians 4:19 (KJV)

You need: a Bible, 5 paper loaves and 2 paper fish, a marker, tape, a small basket or lunch bag, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child. If you have them: 12 baskets or bowls.

Before class: write the memory verse on the 5 loaves and 2 fish (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at John 6:9.

1. Opening game: Pass the Basket (5–10 minutes)

Sit in a circle. Put one paper loaf in a small basket and pass it around while you clap. When you stop clapping, the child holding the basket says one thing they could share with someone: a toy, a snack, a turn or a hug. Ask: *Have you ever had only a little bit, and lots of people wanted some?* Say: "Today we will see what Jesus did with one boy's very small lunch."

2. Bible story: A Little Lunch in Jesus' Hands (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to John 6, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

One day Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee. A **great crowd** of people followed Him, because they had seen the miracles He did when He healed people who were sick (John 6:1–2). Jesus went up on a mountain and sat down there with His disciples, His special helpers (6:3). When Jesus saw all the people, He was moved with compassion. That means He felt sorry for them and wanted to help them, and He healed their sick (Matthew 14:14).

Jesus looked up and saw the huge crowd coming. He asked His disciple **Philip**, "Where can we buy bread, so these people can eat?" Jesus already knew what He was going to do. He asked to test Philip (John 6:5–6). Philip said that two hundred pennies' worth of bread would not be enough for everyone to have even a little (6:7). In Bible times, one penny was a whole day's pay (Matthew 20:2), so that was a lot of money!

Then **Andrew**, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up (John 6:8). **Read John 6:9 from your Bible:** "There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" Say: "A **lad** is a boy. **Barley loaves** are small loaves of bread made from barley, a grain like wheat. Andrew was asking, 'What good is one little lunch for so many people?'"



The story continues: Jesus said, "Make the men sit down." There was lots of grass in that place, so everyone sat down on the grass. There were about **five thousand men** (John 6:10), plus women and children too (Matthew 14:21)!

Jesus took the loaves and **gave thanks** to God (John 6:11). He looked up to heaven, blessed the food and broke the loaves into pieces (Mark 6:41). Jesus gave the bread to the disciples, and the disciples gave it to the people sitting on the grass. He did the same with the fish. Everyone ate **as much as they wanted** (John 6:11)!

When everyone was full, Jesus told His disciples, "Gather up the pieces that are left, so that nothing is lost" (6:12). The disciples picked up the leftovers and filled **twelve baskets** with pieces of the five barley loaves (6:13)! The people saw the miracle Jesus did, and they said, "This really is the Prophet God promised would come into the world" (6:14).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Who had the loaves and fish? *(A boy, a lad, in the crowd, John 6:9)*
2. How many loaves and fish did he have? *(Five barley loaves and two small fish, 6:9)*
3. What did Jesus do before He handed out the food? *(He gave thanks, 6:11)*
4. How many men sat down to eat? *(About five thousand, 6:10)*
5. How many baskets of leftovers were there? *(Twelve, 6:13)*

4. Memory verse: Loaves and Fish game (5 minutes)

Write the verse on the 5 loaves and 2 fish, one piece each: *But my God / shall supply / all your need / according to / his riches / in glory / by Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19.* Explain the old words: **supply** means give you, **need** means what you really need, and **his riches in glory** means God has more than enough of everything. Tape the pieces up in order and read the verse together. Then take one piece down and put it "in the basket," and read it again. Keep taking one piece away each time until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The boy's lunch was small, but in Jesus' hands it fed thousands of people. Later Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life' (John 6:35). God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."

Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

This week: share something with someone, even if it seems small. Thank God before every meal, like Jesus gave thanks for the loaves.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Jesus Feeds the 5,000 word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/feeding-the-5000-word-search), the coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/feeding-the-5000), or **Twelve Baskets**: before class, hide 12 paper bread pieces around the room. Kids search together and drop each piece into a basket or bowl, counting out loud until all twelve are found, "that nothing be lost" (John 6:12).

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for taking care of everything we need. Help us give You what we have, even when it seems small. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks how Jesus did it: say honestly that the Bible does not explain how. It was a miracle, something only God can do (John 6:14). The same Jesus who made the world (John 1:3, 1:10) can make a little bit into a lot.

